

Listing of Claims:

Claim 97 (cancelled).

Claim 98 (previously amended) An appliance door latch for retaining a striker member, the latch comprising:

a latch frame affixable to a portion of the appliance;

a carrier member held by the latch frame to move between first and second positions;

a spring biasing the carrier member toward the second position;

a gripping member supported on the carrier member to move with the carrier member and rotate independently with respect to the carrier member about a rotational axis, the gripping member rotating to capture a portion of the striker member in a capture position when the striker member enters an opening formed in the gripping member and rotating to release the striker member in a release position when the striker member exits the opening;

a stop device cooperating with the gripping member to hold the carrier member in the first position with the spring in a high state of inner tension when the gripping member is in the release position and to release the carrier member to the second position with the spring in a lower state of inner tension when the gripping member rotates to the capture position, the stop device providing a contact portion for rolling contact with the gripping member;

wherein the stop device includes one or more rolling contact, bearings to support the contact portion for rotation with respect to the latch frame; and,

wherein the stop device includes a pin forming the contact portion at its outer circumferential surface and rotatably supported at its ends by rolling contact bearings.

Claim 99 (cancelled)

Claim 100 (cancelled)

Claim 101 (cancelled).

Claim 102 (cancelled).

Amendment Response
Serial No. 09/993,200 Group Art Unit 3676
Atty. Docket No. 16616-4
Page 3 of 4